

Spotlight on Oconee . . .

Oconee County, which was formed in 1868 from Pickens County, takes its name from an Indian word. This area in the northwest corner of the state, on the edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains, was home to several Indian tribes, including the Creek and the Cherokee, but the Indians gave up their land in treaties signed in 1777 and 1785. After the American Revolution, settlers from other parts of the state began moving in, including Germans from Charleston, who founded the town of Walhalla in 1850. In 1856, work began on a tunnel for the Blue Ridge Railroad that would have linked Charleston with Knoxville, Tennessee, but the Civil War ended that project; the unfinished Stumphouse Tunnel can still be seen today. Several Revolutionary War heroes moved to the Oconee County area after the war, including Andrew Pickens (1739-1817), Robert Anderson (1741-1813), and Benjamin Cleveland (1738-1806).

Seneca Workforce Center

11091 Radio Station Road, P O Box 1499
Seneca, SC 29679
(864) 882-5638 / FAX: (864) 885-0694

Location & Climate

- Located in the northwest corner of the state
- Surrounded by Anderson and Pickens counties, bordered by North Carolina and Georgia
- This region has an average temperature of 59.6 degrees with an annual average rainfall of 87.1 inches.

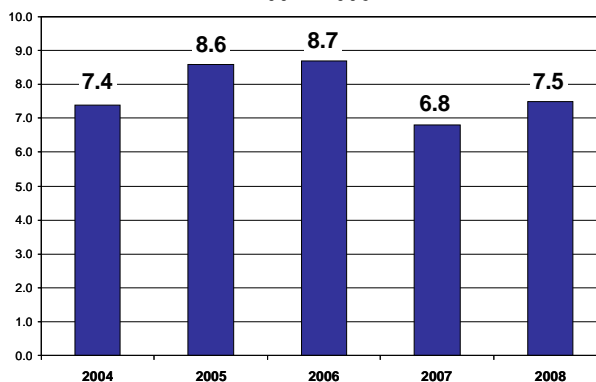
Population

- Was 70,660 in 2007
- Estimated growth to 77,860 by 2015
- 2007 data was comprised of 90.3% White, 8.1% African-American, and 1.6% Other
- The Hispanic-Latino population has increased from 1,562 in 2000 to 2,483 in 2007, a 59.0% change.

Labor Force

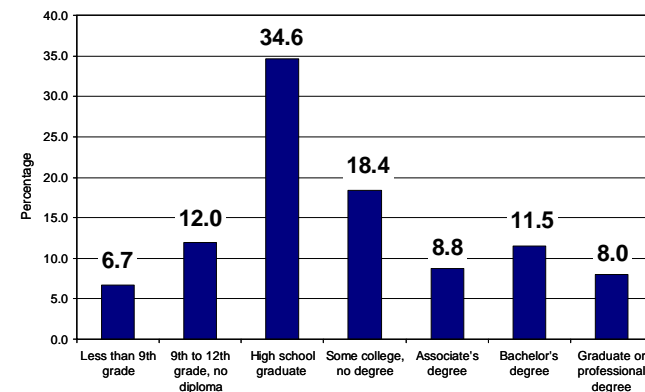
- Increased from 30,290 in 2007 to 30,500 in 2008
- Employment fell from 28,230 in 2007 to 28,210 in 2008.
- Unemployment rate rose from 6.8% in 2007 to 7.5% in 2008.

Unemployment Rates for Oconee County
2004 - 2008



Educational Attainment

Oconee County 2007



Per Capita Income

- County per capita income was \$31,680 for 2007.
- This was 102% of the state's per capita income of \$31,100.
- This was 82% of the national per capita income of \$38,620.

Unemployment Insurance Benefits

The Seneca Workforce Center, serving Oconee County, paid \$7,461,031 in regular unemployment insurance benefits during 2008.



SC Employment Security Commission Labor Market Information

P O Box 995
Columbia, SC 29202
(803) 737-2660 / FAX: (803) 737-2838
(800) 205-9290 (outside the Columbia area)

<http://www.sces.org/lmi>